

THE SOUTH CAROLINA SHRIMP INDUSTRY

A History of Heritage



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SOUTH CAROLINA SEAFOOD HERITAGE TIMELINE

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Era of Commercial Fishing by Sail

- 1850 • “The Mosquito Fleet” manned by African Americans
- 1860 • New England “Smacks” with live-wells to hold fish
 - Post Civil War, “Smacks” purchased by locals
- 1890 • Railroad improvements shifted effort to other ports
- 1900 • Mosquito fleet still sails, peddling fish by carts on streets of Charleston
 - First 1-2 cylinder gas engines introduced = DANGEROUS
 - Trucks replace freighters for hauling
 - Hurricane swamps “Mosquito Fleet” = SAILING ERA ENDS
- 1940



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Era of Commercial Fishing by Motor

1924/
1925

- First shrimp packing house opens in Port Royal, SC = SC shrimp industry born.

1928-
1930

- First cannery dedicated to shrimp opens in Beaufort, SC.



1940-
1945

- Industry declines during World War II.



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Era of Commercial Fishing by Motor

1946/
1948

- Post-war era = Huge advances in technology and supply chain infrastructure.
- Canning declines.
- Shipping fresh shrimp by truck becomes standard.

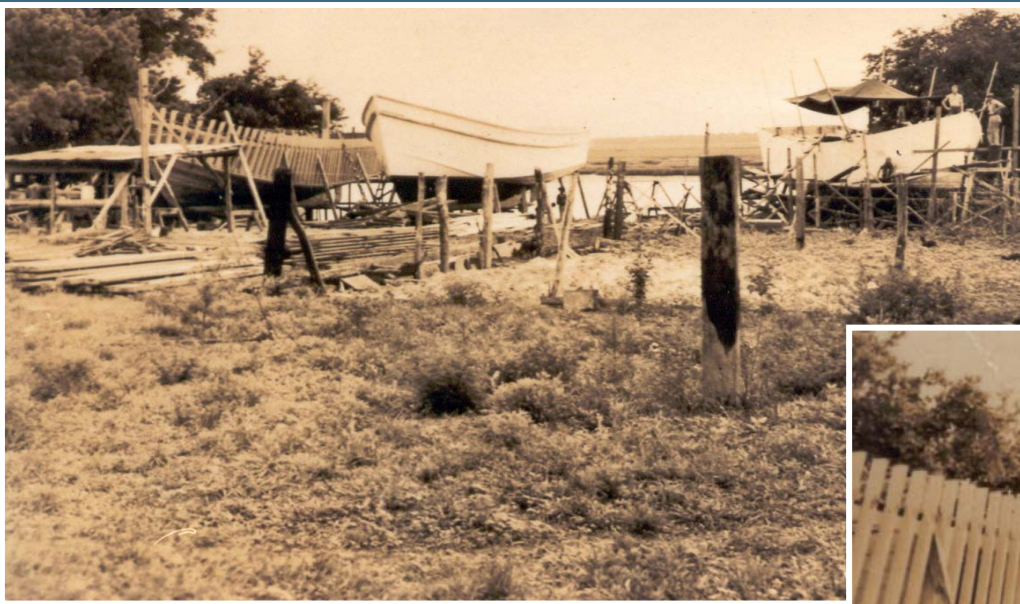


Early-
mid
1950s

- Boat-building in FL, NC, and some of SC
- Larger, stronger craft
- Industry becomes organized = SC Shrimpers Association founded



BOAT CONSTRUCTION, BEAUFORT, SC



BOAT CONSTRUCTION, BEAUFORT, SC

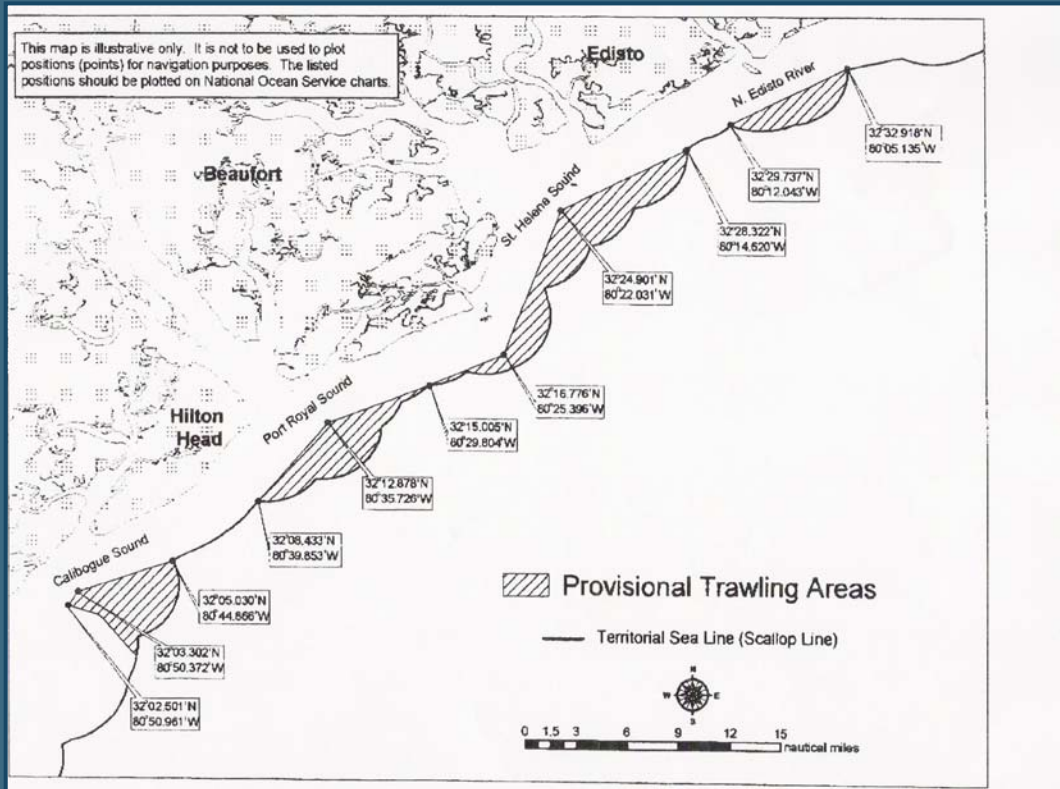


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- 1959 through**
- Trawling grounds become complex = State of SC presents boundaries in formal charts.



- Late 1960s**
- SC Shrimp Association grows = represents ~ 50% of SC shrimpers.



Era of Commercial Fishing by Motor

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Era of Commercial Fishing by Motor

1970s
to
present

- Market changes: processors, breeders, distribution
- Shrimp no longer a luxury product
- Public demand outweighs domestic production
- Imported shrimp arrive on the scene
- High fuel/labor/insurance costs
- 2001 imports flood U.S. market
- Shrimp industry takes action:
 - *Southern Shrimp Alliance*
 - *Federal economic assistance \$*
 - *University research*
 - *SC Seafood Alliance*
 - *Wild American Shrimp, Inc.*



SOUTH CAROLINA SHRIMP HERITAGE

Commercial Fishing:

- Estimated \$30 million per year in SC.

Coastal Retirement and Tourism:

- Estimated \$9 billion per year in SC.

Threats to the SC Shrimp Industry:

- Coastal Development of fishing communities
- Lack of industry infrastructure (in-state processing, freezer space)
- Rising fuel costs and low shrimp prices to the boats

Needs to sustain the SC Shrimp Industry:

- Establish local niche market
- Freezer capacity for year-round supply
- Public awareness about plight of the industry (“Eat local seafood” marketing campaigns)
- Increase shrimp quality to compete with imports

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SUPPORT THE INDUSTRY TODAY, FOR SEAFOOD IN THE FUTURE



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